

Message Text

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SUBJ: SPANISH ACCESSION - SPANISH NEGOTIATOR BEGINS
DISCUSSIONS ON MODALITIES FOR ENTRY INTO THE EC

1. SUMMARY: SPANISH GOVERNMENT'S "MR. EUROPE", LEOPOLDO CALVO SOTELO, VISITED BRUSSELS MARCH 8-9 TO BEGIN CONSULTATIONS WITH EC COMMISSION OFFICIALS ON THE MODALITIES AND PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS ON SPAIN'S ACCESSION TO THE COMMUNITY. AT THE END OF HIS STAY, CALVO HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE EMPHASIZED SPAIN'S STRONG DESIRE TO ENTER THE COMMUNITY, WHILE NOT MINIMIZING THE DIFFICULTIES INHERENT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. AS A PRELUDE TO THE EC COMMISSION'S PREPARATION OF ITS OPINION ON SPAIN'S APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY AND THE SUBSEQUENT FORMAL ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS, CALVO MET WITH EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT NATALI AND COMMISSION OFFICIALS FOR TWO DAYS THIS WEEK TO
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EXAMINE THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IN WHICH TO BEGIN FORMAL DISCUSSIONS. DURING THESE PRELIMINARY TALKS, CALVO SOTELO WAS HANDED A SERIES OF QUESTIONNAIRES COVERING THE SPANISH ECONOMY SECTOR BY SECTOR. THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTIONNAIRES WILL SERVE AS A PARTIAL BASIS FOR THE OPINION BEING PREPARED BY THE COMMISSION. ACCORDING TO SPANISH MISSION SOURCE, THE

TWO SIDES ALSO AGREED ON A WORK PROGRAM TO BE FOLLOWED DURING THE COMING MONTHS.

3. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THE MEETINGS BETWEEN THE SPANISH AND COMMISSION DELEGATIONS, NATALI OBSERVED THAT THE DATA OBTAINED FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRES SHOULD BE READY BY AUGUST IN ORDER FOR THE COMMISSION TO BEGIN DRAFTING ITS OPINION FOR THE EC COUNCIL. NATALI RE-AFFIRMED THE COMMISSION'S INTENTION TO HAVE THE OPINION READY IN EARLY 1979. HE FURTHER NOTED THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN WILL CONSIST OF THE EC AND SPAIN JOINTLY DEFINING THE MODALITIES AND TERMS OF SPAIN'S ACCESSION TO THE COMMUNITY.

4. AT THE SAME PRESS CONFERENCE, CALVO SOTELO STATED THAT THE HANDING OVER OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES REPRESENTS THE STARTING POINT OF THE PROCEDURE ENVISAGED UNDER ARTICLE 237 OF THE TREATIES OF ROME RELATING TO ACCESSION TO THE EC OF A NEW MEMBER. CALVO DID NOT MINIMIZE CURRENT EC/SPANISH SECTORAL DIFFERENCES ON SUCH QUESTIONS AS STEEL, FISHERIES AND TEXTILES, BUT SAID THESE ISSUES WILL BE DEALT WITH FRANKLY WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING THAT THEY DO NOT HINDER PROGRESS TOWARD ACCESSION. HE EMPHASIZED IT WOULD BE INCONCEIVABLE FOR THE ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS TO FLOUNDER FOR SECONDARY ECONOMIC REASONS AND EXPRESSED CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM OVER UNCLASSIFIED

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THE OUTCOME OF THE FORTHCOMING CONSULTATIONS ON STEEL AND ON THE POSSIBILITIES FOR COMPROMISE IN THE ONGOING DISCUSSIONS OF FISHERIES AND TEXTILES.

5. CALVO SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WILL SHORTLY SUBMIT TO THE SPANISH CORTES A BILL INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE OF VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT) AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD ADAPTING SPAIN'S INTERNAL POLICIES TO COMMUNITY STRUCTURES. HE NOTED THAT ALL MAJOR SPANISH POLITICAL PARTIES SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF SPAIN'S ENTRY INTO THE COMMUNITY, BUT INDICATED THAT THEIR FINAL POSITIONS WILL NOT BE DETERMINED UNTIL MORE ABOUT THE CONDITIONS AND MODALITIES OF ACCESSION BECOME KNOWN. CALVO NOTED THAT SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION STRONGLY FAVORS SPAIN'S ENTRY. HE OBSERVED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION SO THAT THE PRIVATE CITIZEN CAN HAVE A BETTER APPRECIATION OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ACCESSION AND WHAT IT WILL MEAN IN VARIOUS SECTORS. COMMENTING ON THE LENGTH OF TIME REQUIRED FOR THE PRELIMINARY TALKS AND THE FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS, CALVO RECOGNIZED THAT GIVEN EC PROCEDURES, ACCESSION CANNOT BE ACCOMPLISHED OVERNIGHT, BUT SUGGESTED THAT, IN ORDER TO

AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT AMONG SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION, THERE SHOULD BE PERIODIC VISIBLE INDICATIONS OF PROGRESS ON THE DEFINITION OF THE CONDITIONS AND MODALITIES OF ACCESSION. HE SAID, IN REPLY TO NEWSMEN'S QUESTIONS, THAT SPANISH GOVERNMENT COULD AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH THE EC PRIOR TO ACCESSION, PROVIDED SUCH AN ACCEPTANCE DID NOT SERVE AS A MEANS OR EXCUSE FOR DELAYING ACTUAL ACCESSION. REPLYING TO A QUESTION ON SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO, CALVO SOTELO SAID THAT THIS QUESTION WAS NOT IN HIS SPHERE OF COMPETENCE. MORRIS

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